

Concrete Pillboxes Replace German Serried Trench Defenses on West Front

TWELVE MEN ABLE TO HOLD BACK HEAVY TRENCH DRIVE

The most striking feature of the war on the western battle front during the past twelve months is the pillbox system of defense employed by the Germans. According to an article in the Scientific American, entitled "The Trench System of Defense vs. The Pillbox System," and an interesting comparison is drawn between the old trench system and the 1917 "flexible" system of German defense.

The need for the pillbox system was made evident when it was seen that even the most pretentious forms of dugouts and subterranean camps, says the writer, proved vulnerable to allied artillery, aerial supremacy and preponderance of gunfire, which rivaled with the entente forces during the battle of the Somme, convinced the Germans that the old-time system of serried lines of trenches was no longer an efficient means of defense.

"Aerial supremacy," which made possible the laying of accurate artillery fire on the plainly delineated German trenches; preponderance of artillery, which made possible the obliteration of trench systems and the destruction of defenders; perfected barrage fire, which kept German dugout garrisons below ground until it was too late for them to emerge except to surrender—all these factors spelled the doom of the intrenching system, according to the German military leaders.

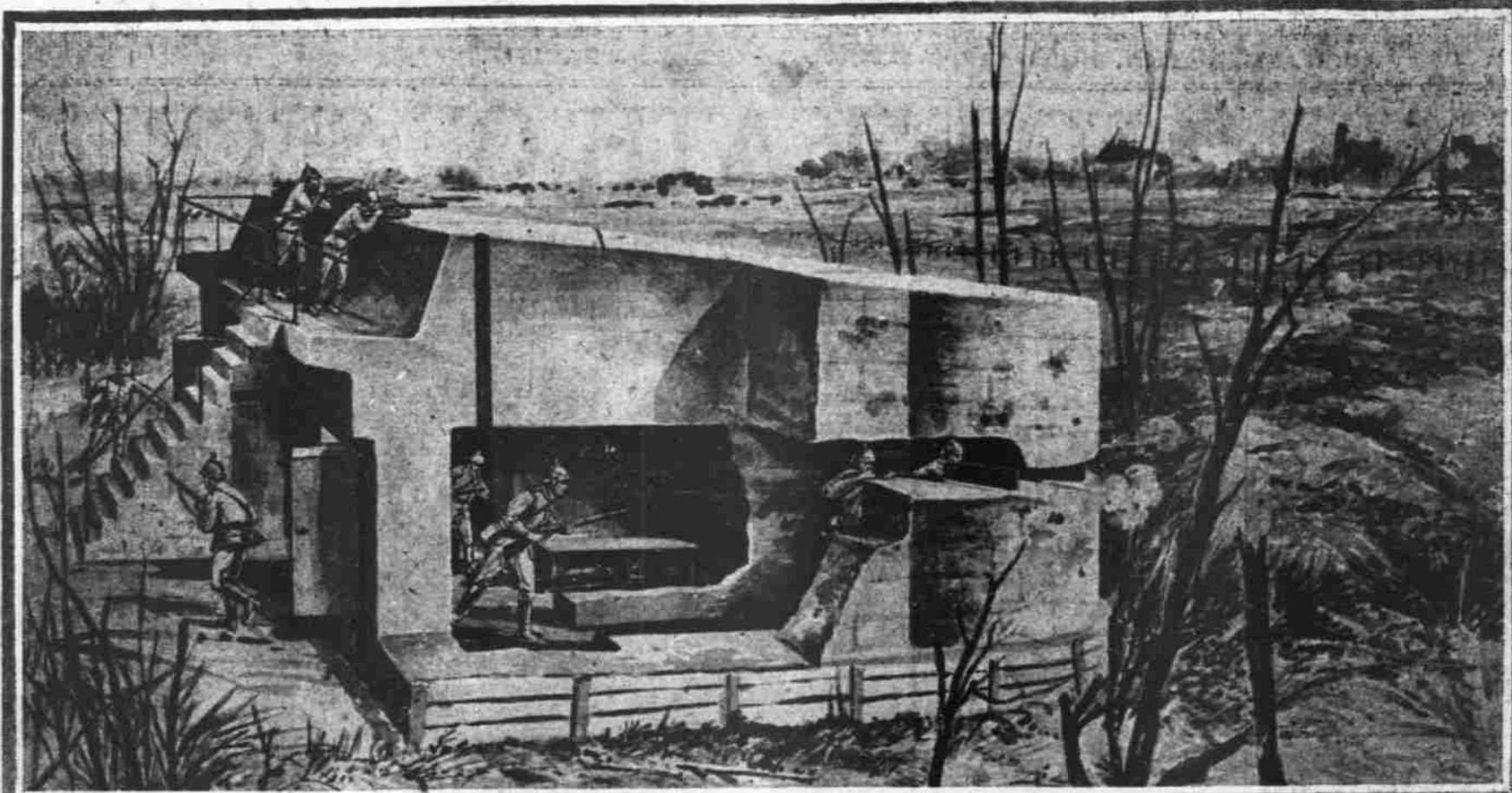
The early days of 1917 witnessed the new system of defense which the Germans sometimes refer to as the "flexible" system, and the British as the "pillbox" system. Instead of a series of parallel trenches connected by communication trenches, in the campaign of this year, the Germans have made use of large numbers of isolated concrete pillboxes, scattered to a considerable depth over the territory to be defended. Heavier troops, for launching counter-offensives, are kept several miles in back of the pillbox, or defensive area, starting with feeble forces near the enemy and gradually increasing the numbers until the whole divisions are held in readiness in the villages at the rear.

To Lower Losses. Theoretically, the pill-box defense is supposed to come out of the bombardment with less than 50 per cent loss. Each pill-box is constructed of reinforced concrete, and nothing short of a direct hit by a big shell can wreck it. The usual pill-box has a garrison of twelve men, and is armed with two or more machine guns, while more powerful blockhouses known as "mebus" are garrisoned by as many as sixty men. The barrage fire passes over the pill-boxes and is directed at the enemy's positions directly hit; and with shells dropping at every thirty feet apart the percentage of German defenses left intact to face the infantry is considerable. As the enemy advances it makes its way through the maze of pill-boxes it is subjected to enfilading machine-gun fire from all sides, and becomes weaker as it penetrates deeper. Finally, when it has passed through the defensive area it is suddenly confronted by fresh German troops pouring out from points far to the rear, which overwhelm the weakened allies.

"But in practice the Germans have been sadly disappointed, in some respects at least. While it is true that a fair percentage of the pill boxes were through the bombardment without damage, their garrisons soon found themselves isolated and besieged by little bodies of especially-trained allied infantry which are left behind for just this purpose, while the main body pushes on. And although the losses of the attackers are considerable, a surprisingly large number penetrate far enough into the defensive zone to make the gain worth while. Meanwhile the German support troops, not knowing exactly what has taken place of the control of the front, are left with them, are rather slow in counter-attacking, and when they do counter-attack they are obliged to cover a considerable distance only to find the attackers firmly entrenched and ready to receive them.

Men Held in Check. "The allies have made it a point in their 1917 offensive to hold their men in check; each attack is clearly worked out and the objectives limited before the men 'go over the top.' This permits the artillery fire to be just as it reaches their objectives, so that the German troops coming across open ground in the counter attack are subjected to a hurricane of fire just as it they were the original attackers."

The writer, however, argues that there are some flaws in the pill-box



The diagram shows the construction of German concrete pillboxes. Dotting the battlefield, they have, in a measure, replaced the numberless lines of trenches in the German defense system.

Vanished On Eve of Wedding.



CARL LOUIS AHRENS, Honor man at Missionary School, whose disappearance has given rise to many stories.

arrangement, as it places the defenders supporting troops too far back of the front line, which delays a counter attack, and also says that the counter attack must be carried out in the open without any protection against hostile fire because of the absence of communication trenches. He further points out that the garrisons of the isolated pill boxes do not experience the sense of safety that the trench defenders had, and the lack of communication trenches.

In conclusion, the author concedes that the pill box is practical if the enemy attempts to penetrate a considerable distance into the defensive zone in the usual way. "But if the attackers only attempt to penetrate to a moderate distance and then hold on to what they have conquered, the pill-box defense fails because of the distance the German support troops must traverse, and the lack of communication trenches."

It is simply a matter of being satisfied with a little gain at a time, instead of trying to break the German lines and settling the war in one battle."

SUNDAY HAULING URGED TO SOLVE FREIGHT PROBLEM

Prompt action to relieve the present freight congestion in the Washington yards is being undertaken today by the committee on freight and drayage appointed last night at the conference called by Commissioner Brownlow in an effort to find a solution of the traffic problem.

Co-operation on the part of the merchants in quickly hauling the freight from the yards as it arrives will be effected by the committee.

"Delay on the part of consignees in getting their freight out of the yards is mainly responsible for the present situation," said Commissioner Brownlow today. "Many merchants in the city will not receive freight after 4 o'clock in the afternoon, others will not receive it after 4:30, and one large concern will not permit deliveries after 11 o'clock in the morning."

The co-operation of the merchants with the drayage companies and the railroads is to be brought about by the committee and by consignees receiving freight after 4 o'clock and on Sundays and holidays the present congestion can be relieved and the embargo against Washington lifted.

AHRENS IS CALLED FICKLE BY NOTED ADVENTURIST PASTOR

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ing himself as fully satisfied to go forward with the marriage, and it was soon after that that Ahrens gave another demonstration of his fickleness, which resulted in his running away. "He visited several of his boy friends who were staying at the cottage Lyndon Hall and said: 'I will give \$100 in gold if you will help me to get away.'"

"They replied that they would not help him if he offered them \$1,000. He then met three other friends and tried to get them to enter into the scheme of kidnapping him in order that he might have an excuse of getting out of the marriage."

"One of these young men did walk across the rocks in the Sigo creek with him, thus going through the form of 'kidnaping' him."

Phones Kidnaping Story. "About 10:30 p. m. he called up on the phone to talk with his fiancée, who, declining to respond, Dr. Miller was called, and Ahrens related the story of his being kidnapped, and said he wanted to come at once, and be married. He also asked for the minister and Miss French to be brought into town, or for some one to come after him, and to this she declined."

"Three of Ahrens' young men friends, who were to be guests at the wedding, heard of his sudden departure and hastened to Union Station, where they found him. They reasoned with him about getting married, and one of them even phoned to Dr. Miller, and asked if the ceremony couldn't go on anyhow."

"Ahrens remained in Washington that night, and left for his home the next morning. After reaching his home in Little Valley, N. Y., he called up by long-distance telephone, again asking if the ceremony could be held; that he wanted to return and settle the whole affair."

Deplorable Disparity of Ages. "Young Ahrens had very freely deplored the disparity in the ages of himself and Miss French, she being eight years older than he, though in her presence he was captivated. He was made to doubt and vacillate through the taunting remarks of his schoolmates, and on such occasions would give expression to sentiments which led them to question the sincerity of his affection."

"He even went so far as to ask the officials of the institution to consent to their having a secret marriage, and he was emphatically told that nothing like this could be allowed."

"As to the report that he was being forced to marry against his wishes, that is absolutely false. When it was decided to appoint him steward of the sanatorium, and knowing that he was to be married, members of the board of management did advise him to enter into the ceremony upon entering upon his new duties. This was done more to remove embarrassment in dealing with institutional problems and maintain the standard that is set before the young people of both the sanatorium and college than anything else."

Resigned As Preceptor. "He had resigned as preceptor of the college, and went to the city on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the automobile with the man he was to succeed, and who had accepted another position in the denomination."

"Now that he has conducted himself in this way, he will not be employed by either institution."

Congress What It Did Yesterday

Western "Anti-Monopolists"—Sugar "Co-ordination" As They See It—The Machine Gun Contest—Colonel Lewis' Royalties. Progress of Shipping.

By W. V. BYARS.

The West, between the Great Bend of the Missouri river and the Pacific, took possession of the Senate Committee on Manufactures yesterday and had its own way. It attacked in solid formation and kept on coming. It was Beet Sugar day, and the interest of the Western beet sugar-growing area was represented. They were anti-monopolists. They were fighters. They belonged to the "old school." They would have been delighted to see about a score of great financial experts in jail, whether patriotic or not. They proceeded to tell why. They succeeded.

George H. Bayard, of Nebraska; J. R. Newberry, of Riverside, Cal.; J. A. Hicks, of Greeley, Colo.; J. M. Collins, of Eaton, Colo.; Fred Cummings, and Dr. R. E. Jones, also of Colorado, represented sugar beet growers of the International Association and the Southern California Association. The witnesses against the "unified control" of beet-sugar making followed each other on the stand as if they were "going over the top" for work with the bayonet.

In their view, the sugar interests of the West and of the country are still controlled by experienced and expert monopolists. The Sherman anti-trust law is being violated every day. The beet sugar factory interest is under control of "the same old trusts." Cane sugar and beet sugar making have interlocking stockholders. The great cane-sugar refiners may wish to hold back beet-sugar development. They have paid starvation prices to beet growers and realized "enormously" in prices from the public.

This theory underlies their testimony as given before the committee. Thomas Lee Woolwine, the anti-trust district attorney of Los Angeles county, California, represented it. He gave full details of his anti-monopoly fight under the State law and filed transcripts of the testimony before the grand jury.

Illustrating profits made at the expense of both the beet growers and the public, he said that A. J. Cruikshank, general manager of the Santa Anna Company, admitted before the grand jury that his company made between \$800,000 and \$900,000 on \$1,250,000 invested—this in a single year, refining the 1916 beet crop. For the same year, he reported that the Los Alamitos Sugar Company made \$385,000 on \$600,000 actual investment.

Mr. Hoover's co-operation was shown as without effect on the situation. His earnestness was not questioned. It was repeatedly suggested that he was necessarily "in the hands of his friends"—that men he was obliged to trust could not understand any sort of patriotism which conflicted with their own interest.

Mr. Hoover was to have appeared to give his side of the case. He sent a type-written statement instead. The committee ruled that it did not constitute an appearance. The statement was filed "for reference only," and not made public. Mr. Hoover is expected to appear in person on Friday next.

Yesterday was devoted to machine gun before the Senate Committee on Military Affairs. President A. E. Borie, of the Savage Machine Gun Company, and Col. Isaac M. Lewis, inventor of the Lewis machine gun, appeared supporting each other. They were the only witnesses. It was their day. They made the most of it.

Before the day was over Colonel Lewis had exhausted the subject, as he wished to "get it off his con-

FALL OF BOLSHIEVIKI IN FEW DAYS SEEN IN ADDED TURMOIL

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the streets, with rifle and machine-gun fire. Armored cars were used in a battle in the Marie Theater square to disperse mob intent on a massacre of the Jews. Many shops, dwellings, and the Danish Red Cross have been pillaged.

The fighting followed attempts by the Bolshevik government to withdraw four army corps suddenly turned anti-Bolshevik. Every report seeping through the Maximalist-controlled censorship from the Bolsheviks today indicated that dissolution of the Lenin-Trotsky regime is at hand.

Letish troops, heretofore the main reliance of the pacifist government, were now reported becoming shaky. All Caucasian troops adopted joint resolutions demanding that the Bolsheviks surrender their power to the Constituent Assembly, which they have prevented meeting.

The Rabochaya Gazeta, once supporting the Maximalists, in its issue today declared:

"The days of the Bolsheviks are numbered. They are unable to give the people either peace or bread or land. They have given them only civil war. The workers and the soldiers are beginning to awaken. They will soon show their might in behalf of the fatherland."

A manifesto recently issued by the original soviet of air-Russian delegates and received here pleads with the people to "arise and defend parliament against the usurpers who are now seeking a shameful separate and imperialistic peace."

LONDON, Dec. 23.—A German airplane has been brought down and its crew of three captured in one of two German raids, announced by Lord

Turkey Should Be Cheap, Says Hoover; Evidently Turkeys Don't Know It

Christmas turkey should sell for not more than 45 cents a pound. That is what the United States food administration announces tonight, but—

Turkey is selling for more than 60 cents a pound, and the seller has the would-be turkey consumer at his mercy in those places where the food administration has not persuaded dealers to conform to a "reasonable" price. Reports from various regions indicate there are many such places.

Don't be deceived, warns the administration, by tales of turkey shortage. Although cold storage birds have decreased, fresh killed ones from Oklahoma and Texas have been held back purposely for the Christmas demand, and if the demand is held back turkeys will come down.

GERMAN TROOPS TO BRING ORDER TO PETROGRAD, IS WORD AT HAPARANDA

French, commander-in-chief of home defense forces.

The first attempted raid was over the Kentish coast, the enemy flyers being sighted at 8 o'clock last night. Of this party of aerial bomb-droppers one machine, a Gotha, was downed.

The second raid occurred at 9:30 p. m. A few bombs were dropped over the Isle of Thanet. "No casualties and no damage was reported tonight," Lord French reported.

STOCKHOLM, Dec. 23.—Proclamations were posted in the Russian barracks at Haparanda today that German troops would soon arrive at Petrograd "in order to establish order."

The newspaper Djelo Naroda said there is growing agitation in Petrograd for restoration of the monarchy. Proclamations will be posted today, it was stated, urging that the Grand Duke Alexieff be made regent and the Grand Duke Alexandrovitch and Prince Leopold of Bavaria vice regents.

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LONDON, Dec. 23.—Italy's troops on the northern front have again scored a signal success. The Rome war office reported the recapture by them of further ground in the sector of Monte Anzole, the important height that fell to the Teutons last Tuesday.

The Austro-German forces immediately organized a counter thrust, but it was crushed in the Italian barrage.

The Latins are cheered by their recent successes, and are holding the invaders at bay everywhere. Official news from Berlin and Vienna admitted indirectly that the Teutons are once more on the defensive. The Monte Anzole sector is vital because this and other heights nearby dominate the valley leading into the Venetian plains.

White Rock Unsurpassed Mineral Water

Business Men and Heads of Families—who usually remember faithful employees and members of their households at Christmas with presents of Gold or Silver Coin, can serve their country and help to save the lives of "Our Boys Over There" by giving instead

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—These war stamps are better than cash, for the reason that they increase in value. For example: a War Savings Stamp costing \$4.12 is redeemable at maturity for \$5. Thrift Stamps, 25c each.

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NOTICE TO DRAFT REGISTRANTS

Notaries Public will remain at the bank from 5 P. M. to 6:30 P. M. to accommodate men in the business section who may not be able to make their acknowledgments on the Questionnaires during business hours.

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Capital and Surplus \$3,000,000
Resources Over \$20,000,000